
HOUSE BILL 1837

State of Washington 60th Legislature 2007 Regular Session

By Representatives Newhouse, Cody and Schual-Berke

Read first time 01/30/2007. Referred to Committee on Health Care & Wellness.

1 AN ACT Relating to directing the department of health to develop
2 guidelines for the safety of individuals who rely upon stretchers and
3 personal mobility devices; amending RCW 18.73.180; adding a new section
4 to chapter 18.73 RCW; and creating new sections.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that licensed
7 ambulance services provide high quality service to patients needing
8 medical attention en route as well as to patients who must be
9 transported by stretcher. The legislature also finds that there is a
10 portion of the population that, although traveling in a stretcher, may
11 not need the level of care that a licensed ambulance service offers.
12 For this segment of the population, there is no less expensive
13 transportation alternative.

14 The legislature finds that there is a need for clear guidelines to
15 delineate when it is appropriate to transport patients between health
16 care facilities and patients who are being released from medical care
17 who are capable of being transported safely by stretcher without the
18 use of a licensed ambulance service. In addition, the legislature

1 finds that the rights of individuals who rely upon personal mobility
2 devices in the normal course of their lives must be protected so that
3 they may have appropriate transportation options available to them.

4 **Sec. 2.** RCW 18.73.180 and 1987 c 214 s 14 are each amended to read
5 as follows:

6 Other vehicles not herein defined by this chapter shall not be used
7 for transportation of patients who must be carried on a stretcher or
8 who may require medical attention en route, except that such
9 transportation may be used when:

10 (1) A disaster creates a situation that cannot be served by
11 licensed ambulances; or

12 (2) An individual under the care of a hospital or nursing home is
13 to be transferred, while on a stretcher, to another facility or
14 discharged from medical care and the individual meets the
15 transportation guidelines developed under section 3 of this act as
16 determined by appropriate medical personnel at the facility.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 18.73 RCW
18 to read as follows:

19 (1) The department shall develop guidelines to establish when it is
20 appropriate to transport an individual on a stretcher in a vehicle
21 other than a licensed ambulance when the individual has been under the
22 care of a hospital or nursing home and is to be transferred to another
23 facility or discharged from medical care. The department shall consult
24 with the state's emergency medical program directors for advice and
25 assistance in developing the guidelines. The guidelines shall:

26 (a) Assist hospital, nursing home, and vehicle personnel in
27 determining which individuals who must be transported on a stretcher
28 may require medical attention en route and those individuals who may be
29 safely transported on a stretcher without medical concerns;

30 (b) Determine which personnel at the hospital or nursing home are
31 the appropriate medical personnel to decide that the individual may
32 safely travel on a stretcher in a vehicle other than a licensed
33 ambulance; and

34 (c) Recommend any equipment that must be on the vehicle and any
35 staffing and training that the vehicle personnel must have to ensure
36 passenger safety.

1 (2) Nothing in this section requires that a vehicle other than a
2 licensed ambulance obtain a license to transport individuals in
3 accordance with the guidelines. Nothing in this section requires that
4 the department take disciplinary action against a vehicle other than a
5 licensed ambulance for failure to meet any recommended training or
6 equipment standards in the guidelines, except that the department may
7 use the guidelines in any case where it is asserted that a vehicle
8 other than a licensed ambulance was used to transport an individual who
9 should have been transported by a licensed ambulance.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** (1) The department of health shall conduct
11 a pilot project to determine appropriate standards for the safe
12 transportation of individuals who must be transported on a stretcher.
13 The pilot project must include one site in the eastern portion of the
14 state and one site in the western portion of the state. Trips provided
15 pursuant to the pilot project by a pilot project participant are exempt
16 from compliance with RCW 18.73.180 when operating in accordance with
17 the terms of the pilot project. The pilot project must seek to inform
18 the guidelines established in section 3 of this act regarding issues
19 such as:

20 (a) The identification of individuals who need to be transported on
21 a stretcher and must be transported by a licensed ambulance or may be
22 transported by vehicles other than licensed ambulances, including
23 individuals who have recently been discharged from a hospital or
24 nursing home and individuals who use personal mobility devices in the
25 normal course of their lives;

26 (b) The identification of appropriate medical personnel at
27 hospitals and nursing homes who may determine whether or not the
28 guidelines have been met to allow an individual to be transported by a
29 vehicle other than a licensed ambulance; and

30 (c) Recommended personnel training and vehicle equipment for
31 vehicles other than licensed ambulances when transporting an individual
32 in a prone or supine position.

33 (2) The pilot project must also study best practices for
34 transporting individuals with disabilities who rely upon personal
35 mobility devices in the normal course of their lives, including methods
36 for securing an individual's personal mobility device and methods for
37 securing atypical mobility devices. In developing the pilot project

1 and selecting best practices, the department of health shall consult
2 with representatives of organizations representing people who use
3 personal mobility devices.

4 (3) The pilot project may also study:

5 (a) Which other individuals may be safely transported on a
6 stretcher in a prone or supine position in a vehicle other than a
7 licensed ambulance, such as obese individuals who need special
8 accommodations;

9 (b) Methods for identifying and accommodating individuals with
10 disabilities who rely upon personal mobility devices in the normal
11 course of their lives; and

12 (c) Other issues that the department of health finds warrant
13 further study.

14 (4) By November 15, 2009, the department of health shall report to
15 the legislature on the findings of the pilot project and the
16 development of the guidelines.

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